

**GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE FACULTY MEETING
OCTOBER 27TH 2017 EXPLORATORY HALL RM 3301**

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:05pm by COS Faculty Chair Tim Leslie

II. Approval of Minutes of April 12th 2016: The minutes were approved.

III. Announcements from the Dean

Dean Agouris attended the meeting to discuss “Our College Today” (See Attached Slides).

She spoke about the new budget model and how the College is becoming the responsibility center for many financial decisions. She expanded this conversation to talk about the college’s financial risk, noting that COS starts each fiscal year in significant debt. Progress has been made over the last two years and the risk has already been reduced by half. The goal is to reduce it permanently. The College does face some financial challenges. Our facilities are expensive to run, costing several millions a year. The College is asking for creativity to help reduce costs in order to allocate additional funds to the departments and centers.

The Dean pointed out highlights of the College’s profile

- COS represents 1/3 of Mason’s research expenditures. This activity involves a large number of research faculty and PIs that need staff support. More than 50% of our HR and financial staffing in the college and departments is due to our extensive research activities.
- We are the 2nd largest college in faculty FTE but 3rd in staff (299/93) behind CHSS (385/140) and CEHD (120/108). She emphasized that while we do have a lot of staff, we also have more faculty (including a high number of research faculty) than most other colleges, and do a lot more research than all the other colleges, which means that the needs of our faculty (i.e. support for proposals, awards, grant management, etc.) are significant.

The Dean then spoke about shared governance with COS Faculty

1. The Dean pointed out that, as expected, some financial decisions reside with her – but she would like to have input. Therefore she has created a **COS Budget Planning and Advisory committee** – composed of 3 chairs, 1 center director, 1 faculty, and 2 associate deans –that discuss and provide recommendations, guidance, and assistance with these decisions. This committee has been in place for a year, and has already worked with the Dean to allocate funds for

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- equipment (\$1.9 million of college funds) through an open proposal process, and departmental resource requests (including positions).
2. In addition, a **Space Review and Allocation Advisory Committee** – similar in composition – will be put in place.
 3. In addition to an established monthly meeting with the chairs and program directors, the College holds a Deans and Chairs Semi-Annual retreat to update on college affairs by COS administration. Most importantly, once a year, during the retreat, there are presentation of needed resources by all COS chairs. These offer the opportunity for chairs to discuss their needs openly and demonstrate to their peers why their department merits resources. The requests are then discussed by the COS Budget Planning and Advisory committee.
 4. The Dean has asked for explicit Promotion and Tenure expectations. There was a general consensus that P&T criteria should be addressed by the home Departments first. Departments have been asked to establish a list of minimum expectations that reflect their respective scientific field expectations for promotion and tenure to serve as a guiding baseline for their faculty. Once all the data is in, then the college's P&T Level 2 committee will work to propose transparent college baseline expectations.
 5. Finally, the Dean's office has worked with the departments to establish discipline-based definitions of Research Productivity which will supplement the COS Workload Policy.

Finally, the Dean addressed Research. In particular, she emphasized broadening our sources of research income. She also announced that she provided funds to support all COS Multidisciplinary Research proposals that were rated Competitive or Highly Competitive during the last year's Provost Multidisciplinary Research Awards competition but were not ultimately funded.

Dean Agouris also announced several upcoming events and planned initiatives:

- a. Dr Ali Andalibi is working toward the establishment of a Grant Preparation Support Forum.
- b. Smart Cities is a research area where the Dean suggested the College could be more active and competitive. She sees several potential areas including but not limited to (1) Physical-social, environmental, and energy-related issues (2) Health, well-being, and safety education and services, and (3) Transportation, telecommunications, economic development etc.
- c. The Dean stressed that communication within our college and making connections across departments and even colleges is an emphasis area for the Dean's office this year.

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- d. Dean's Fellow – there will be a new position for a faculty member to shadow the dean. The purpose of this position is, amongst other things, to find ways to improve working communications between faculty and staff and the Dean's office, and increased transparency.
- e. Walk-In Meetings – Dean Agouris is looking to increase openness by enabling direct communications with the dean. There will be scheduled times, twice a month, where she will be available on a first-come first-served basis.
- f. Transparency – The dean is looking to establish a feedback platform for COS Faculty and Staff – which may be anonymous. She feels that faculty input will be vital for the future success of COS. In addition, she suggested that faculty can do the following:
 - Ask questions and communicate with their chair
 - Participate in college activities
 - Understand the dynamics and mechanics of the academic enterprise
 - Voice their concerns before they become toxic
 - Share their ideas for improvement
 - Let the COS administration know what they do well

Question: What is the future of Krasnow and Neuroscience?

Dean Agouris: Neuroscience will be managed by the COS. Donna Fox, Saleet Jafri and Nadine Kabani will be working on the schema for advising issues. We hope the transition will be complete by mid-May 2017.

Question: How do balance Research and Teaching buyouts in an economic sense?

Dean Agouris: As President Cabrera said during the recent COS town hall, while we are now an R1 Institution, we will remain accessible and are not interested in being an Ivy League-like school in terms of selectivity and limited access.

In financial terms, to put research cost and revenue in perspective, while the University has a budget close to one billion dollars, income from research is less than \$20 million. We need to have a research presence on a number of levels for several reasons, such as to heighten the image and reputation of the University and attract high quality students and faculty. While some are deeply involved in research and would like a lighter teaching load, others who focus on teaching will have to increase their teaching activities, so that we can support and enhance the individual strengths of all faculty. This is best done at the departmental level, addressing these needs in a more personalized way, keeping in mind that we are an institution that requires research as part of the faculty workload.

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IV. Motion to change to our bylaws

Proposed addition to our bylaws regarding the Undergraduate Council was read.

A representative to the Undergraduate Council shall be appointed by the Dean. A second representative to the Undergraduate Council will be elected by the College of Science faculty. The term of service is two years. If any elected representative is unable to complete a term, a new representative will be elected to a two-year term. Any representative to the Undergraduate Council must meet the requirements for membership specified in the bylaws of the Undergraduate Council.

A Vote will be held at the next meeting.

V. The meeting was adjourned at 1:00pm.